

# THE BIG ISSUE

VOLUME 32, ISSUE 1  
JANUARY-MARCH 2014

S.C. DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE SERVICES

## GOVERNOR TAKES ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

On March 14, Governor Nikki Haley issued Executive Order 2014-22 creating the Governor's Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Council – established with the task of developing a comprehensive and proactive plan to combat prescription drug abuse across the state.

S.C. Inspector General Patrick Maley previously released a report highlighting that prescription drug regulation in South Carolina could benefit from a more coordinated effort among state agencies.

"Prescription drug abuse is a serious issue in this country and in South Carolina, affecting far too many of our citizens and their families," said Gov.

Haley. "Finding solutions for drug addiction of any kind is always complicated and takes a real team effort."

The Council will evaluate the extent of prescription drug abuse throughout the state, develop solutions, and annually report this data to the governor once the plan is implemented. This statewide plan will require coordination among all agencies that have a regulatory, enforcement, or treatment role in this issue.

The National Center for Disease Control has classified prescription drug abuse as a national epidemic. This epidemic has a significant financial and emotional impact on South Carolina families as well as an economic impact on the state. In 2010, an estimated 30% of South Carolina Medicaid recipients received an addictive opioid prescription at a cost of \$24 million to taxpayers.

"Preventing the spread of the prescription drug abuse

problem is a critical priority, and success will require concerted efforts at the local level," said DAODAS Director Bob

Toomey. "The statewide network of local alcohol and drug abuse agencies will be a vocal, active and energetic partner in this initiative."

The Council will include a representative from each of the following organizations: DAODAS; SLED; Department of Health and Environmental

Control; Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation; Department of Health and Human Services; Board of Dentistry; Board of Medical Examiners; Board of Nursing; Board of Pharmacy; and a South Carolina solicitor's office.



### DIRECTOR'S CORNER

As we at DAODAS plan for the next fiscal year – and our county alcohol and drug abuse authorities engage in their own planning processes at the local level – it's important for us to remember the purposes of our primary funding source, the federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SAPT BG).

Grantees use the SAPT BG for prevention, treatment, recovery support, and other services to supplement Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance services. Specifically, block grant recipients are expected to use the awards for the following purposes:

- To fund priority treatment and support services for individuals without insurance or for whom coverage is terminated for short periods of time.
- To fund those priority treatment and support services that demonstrate success in improving outcomes and/or supporting recovery that are not covered by Medicaid, Medicare, or private insurance.
- To fund primary prevention by providing universal, selective, and indicated prevention activities and services for persons not identified as needing treatment.
- To collect performance and outcome data to determine the ongoing effectiveness of behavioral health promotion, treatment, and recovery support services.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Toomey".



## LEXINGTON/RICHLAND AND SPARTANBURG DIRECTORS RETIRE

David L. Forrester Sr., Executive Director of the Spartanburg Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (SADAC), and Debbie Francis, President and CEO of LRADAC (Lexington/Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council), recently retired from their respective agencies, ending a combined 42 years of leadership in the state substance abuse system.

Forrester took the helm of SADAC in 1979 after serving as Director of Intervention and Prevention for the Greenville County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, which he joined in 1973. One of his early duties with the Greenville agency was helping establish the Alcohol Safety Action Program (now ADSAP) for DUI offenders, and he

continued this emphasis on criminal justice services at SADAC, while also building the agency's prevention effort into one of the most active in the state.

Before her tenure at LRADAC, Francis practiced healthcare law. Her management experience includes serving as Chief of Staff for DAODAS and Deputy Director of Programs for the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to working in state government, Francis practiced community pharmacy. She joined LRADAC in June 2005 as its General Counsel and Chief Operating Officer. In March 2006, Francis also assumed the position of President, and in April 2008 was named Chief Executive Officer.

Forrester is succeeded by Susan O'Brien, M.A., CASAC, who comes to SADAC from her position as Supervisor of Adult Services for Unity Health System in Rochester, N.Y.

After conducting a nationwide search, LRADAC's Board of Directors selected Gayle Aycock, the agency's Director of Quality Assurance, as the new President and CEO.



*Debbie Francis and Bob Toomey display the Order of the Palmetto presented to Francis during her retirement celebration.*

### TRAINING

**CARF Standards Update** – April 11 – DMH/DAODAS Administration Building, Columbia, SC

**Medicaid Targeted Case Management for Substance Abuse Treatment Providers** – April 15 – LRADAC Education Center, Columbia, SC

**FAVOR SC Recovery Training Academy** – May 5-9 – Residence Inn Northeast, Columbia, SC

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**South Carolina**  
**DAODAS**  
Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services

### START WALKING!

**NAMIWalks 2014** – April 5 – DMH Bull Street Campus – [www.namimidcarolina.org](http://www.namimidcarolina.org)

**Walk Like MADD** – April 6 – Saluda Shoals Park – [www.madd.org/local-offices/sc/](http://www.madd.org/local-offices/sc/)

### CORRECTION

*In our December 2013 issue, we reported that SCAADAC "Counselor of the Year" Rickey Dennis was employed by Charleston Center. In fact, he is an employee of Trident Technical College. We apologize for the error.*

## 2013 SEES ZERO TRAFFIC DEATHS IN EDGEFIELD COUNTY

Edgefield County ended 2013 with zero traffic fatalities, the only South Carolina county able to make this claim.

A few years ago, if you were driving drunk in Edgefield County, you were unlikely to run into a DUI checkpoint. The county only ran two or three checkpoints a month. "Edgefield ranked as one of the top counties in the state for DUI crashes," said Allen Easler, a prevention specialist with Cornerstone, the alcohol and drug abuse authority serving Greenwood, Edgefield, McCormick and Abbeville counties.

Half of the crashes in the county were DUI related; in other counties, the number was only 10 to 20 percent. After a year with a large number of fatalities, the county sheriff's office started working with a grant program to turn that around.

"We looked at...what was going on here, why so many crashes," Easler explained. Part of the answer was the lack of checkpoints, which officers were unable to conduct because they lacked basic supplies. "They needed flashlights, body cameras, point-and-shoots, signs," Easler said.

With a grant from Cornerstone, the officers were able to purchase the supplies and provide training on how to do proper checkpoints. Now the Edgefield County Sheriff's Office is running as many as 20 checkpoints a month.

"These guys have been working their tails off doing checkpoints and keeping people safe," Easler said, "because one fatality is one too many."

*(Source: WJBF.com)*